



Your Mood on Food

Nourishing Your Mind: An Introductory Guide on How to Optimize Your Mental Health Through Nutrition

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Underlying Influences on Mental Health

Nutrient Deficiencies

Deficiencies in vitamins like B vitamins, vitamin D zinc, magnesium, amino acids and fatty acids can contribute to symptoms associated with mood disorders.

Poor Relationship with Food

A poor relationship with food can significantly impact mental health, intertwining with emotional, psychological, and physiological factors that collectively shape our mood and well-being

Hormonal Imbalances

Hormonal imbalances play a crucial role in shaping mental health, as fluctuations in hormones can impact neurotransmitters, mood-regulating pathways, and overall emotional state.

Dysbiosis and Gut Health

A balanced gut is one of the key factors in promoting optimal mental health. Dysbiosis, an imbalance in gut microbiota and disruptions in the gut-brain axis can contribute to mood disturbances and mental health challenges.

Blood Sugar Dysregulation

Balancing blood sugar is crucial for optimizing mental health, as fluctuations in glucose levels can mimic symptoms commonly associated with mental health, such as mood swings, irritability, fatigue, and brain fog.

Cortisol Imbalances

Disruptions in stress hormone levels can impact neurotransmitter function, contributing to mood disorders, anxiety, and cognitive challenges. Maintaining a healthy balance of cortisol through lifestyle and dietary choices is essential in fostering optimal mental well-being

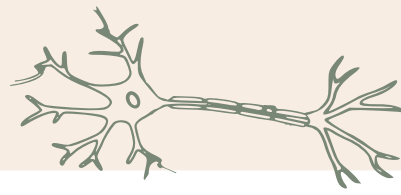
Celiac Disease and Food Sensitivities

Gluten-related disorders and dietary sensitivities can trigger inflammation, compromising gut health and neurotransmitter function, thereby contributing to symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and cognitive disturbances.

Physical Activity

Regular exercise supports improved mood, reduced stress, and enhanced cognitive function. However, it is crucial to be mindful of the potential dangers associated with overexercise, as excessive physical activity can disrupt neurotransmitter balance, contribute to mood disorders, and compromise overall mental well-being.

The Gut-Brain Axis



The gut-brain connection is a fascinating interplay between the digestive system and the central nervous system, exerting a profound impact on mental health. The gut microbiota, a diverse community of microorganisms, communicates with the brain through intricate pathways, influencing neurotransmitter production and immune function.

A balanced gut promotes optimal mental well-being, while imbalances can contribute to mood disorders and cognitive challenges. Nutrient-dense foods, rich in prebiotics and probiotics, support a healthy gut, fostering a positive influence on mood and cognitive function. Leveraging the influence of nutrition to cultivate a symbiotic relationship between the gut and brain represents a promising approach for enhancing mental resilience and well-being.



How Nutrition Influences Mood

Every time you eat, you have an opportunity to nourish your body and mind. Symptoms associated with mental health and mood disorders such as anxiety, depression, brain fog, fatigue, irritability, poor memory, difficulty concentrating, loss of appetite or overeating, loss of interest, insomnia, and low mood or difficulty regulating mood are often presentations of other underlying causes.

Things like inconsistent meal patterns, imbalanced blood sugar, dysregulated nervous system, adrenal fatigue, nutrient deficiencies, chronic inflammation, exposure to heavy metals, improper gut health, hormonal imbalances, and dysregulated neural pathways can all contribute to poor & dysregulated mood.

Your Relationship with Food



A compromised relationship with food can have profound implications for mental health, including disordered eating patterns, negative body image, and obsessive thoughts about food. Restrictive dietary habits may contribute to nutrient deficiencies, amplifying mood imbalances. The social repercussions are also noteworthy, with individuals often avoiding gatherings, withdrawing from social events, and concealing their struggles from friends and family.

Adopting a comprehensive approach that emphasizes individuality, mindful eating, nutritional balance, and addresses underlying emotional aspects is crucial for fostering mental well-being and cultivating a happy and healthy relationship with food.

Lab Testing You May Consider Ordering

- **Complete Blood Count (CBC)**
- **Food allergy / sensitivity testing**
- **Comprehensive Metabolic Panel (CMP)**
- **Homocysteine + MTHFR Genetic Testing**
- **Celiac disease screening (antitissue transglutaminase antibody and antigliadin antibody test)**
- **Hormones (estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, DHEAs, cortisol)**
- **C-reactive protein**
- **Iron panel and ferritin**
- **Essential fatty acids testing**
- **Lipid panel / cholesterol**
- **Folate and B12**
- **Magnesium**
- **Additional b vitamins (b1 and b6)**
- **Complete Thyroid Panel and Thyroid antibodies**
- **Blood sugar (fasting glucose, fasting insulin, hemoglobin A1c)**
- **Vitamin D**
- **Zinc and Copper**

What's it like to work 1-on-1 with a Mental Health Dietitian

Embarking on a one-on-one partnership with a dietitian specializing in mental health **offers a comprehensive exploration of the profound connection between nutrition and mental well-being.** This *individually tailored* journey prioritizes identifying root-cause influences on mental health to support you in your overall mental health journey. This includes:

- Optimizing nutrition and nutrition status
- Uncovering deficiencies or toxicities that can mimic mental health symptoms
- Addressing disordered eating patterns
- Managing meal timing and nutrient support
- Repairing food relationships and establishing sustainable eating patterns
- Helping you to understand how your mental health can influence eating habits, appetite, and motivation for food
- Looking at your overall mental health using a “root cause” perspective, often identifying how underlying dysregulation in the gut, hormones, detoxification pathways, etc. can influence your symptoms
- Helping you implement food as a tool to optimize mood, energy, and cognition
- Exploring and unpacking negative frameworks around health and nutrition that influence how you feel about yourself, and guiding you to sustainable habits that allow you to build confidence around how you nourish your brain and body.

Many dietitians are often covered by insurance as well which makes working with us more accessible! By working in tandem with therapeutic support from a licensed mental health provider or other members of a mental health care team, this professional and collaborative approach empowers clients with the knowledge and tools necessary for promoting a balanced and resilient mind-body connection for the long-term.

Meet your Mental Health *Dietitian*



ABOUT ME


I am a Board Certified and Licensed Registered Dietitian that specializes in Functional Nutrition for Mental Health and Mood Disorders. I work with many individuals who struggle with ADHD, anxiety, depression, OCD, disordered eating and body image, by encompassing a whole-person approach to mental health by focusing on gut health, hormonal health, nutrient optimization, and healthy food relationships.


MY APPROACH


Utilizing a functional and integrative approach, I honor individuality by considering each person's unique biochemistry, genetic influences, environment, and lifestyle to address root causes of mood dysregulation and mitigate associated symptoms. I combine a unique approach rooted in evidence-based nutrition and mindfulness to restore gut function, balance hormones, address nutrient deficiencies, optimize neurotransmitter function, reduce chronic inflammation and help my clients adopt healthy nutrition habits that feasibly fit their lifestyle.

CONTACT

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or to learn more!

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